

Officer Is Accused in Spying; Army Sifts 'Firing' as Motive

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WASHINGTON.—The Army and a Senate subcommittee are investigating charges that a military intelligence officer, doing a favor for a friend in private business, had Army agents "get the goods" on an employe that the friend wanted to fire.

The Senate constitutional rights subcommittee is also investigating charges that the alleged misuse of intelligence agents was covered up at the U. S. Army Intelligence Command at Fort Holabird, Md.

According to documents filed with the Army and with the subcommittee, a colonel at Holabird used security classifications and threat of espionage prosecution in silencing an agent who wanted an investigation of the case.

DROPS PROBE

However, the Army reportedly has dropped its investigation into the coverup charges, accepting the colonel's explanation that he thought that the employe was a relative of a major general and that the general had ordered a hush-hush check.

According to documents filed with the Army and with Sen. Sam J. Ervin's subcommittee staff, an agent of the 771st Military Intelligence Detachment was assigned on Aug. 13, 1969, to obtain information on a messenger employed by Western Union International at St. Croix, the Virgin Islands.

The messenger, Joseph Lynch, had no access to classified information and had no

connection with the military.

According to the documents, a captain at the 771st assigned the agent, Sgt. Dennis B. Flannery, to inquire into Lynch's credit and police records, report the information to Lynch's WUI superiors and be "extremely discreet."

Explaining that national security was involved, Flannery obtained confidential credit records from the St. Croix branch of the First National City Bank and went through police and court records. Lynch had never been arrested, but was mentioned in some police intelligence files.

As ordered, Flannery took the information to Nitel B. Davis, chief of the WUI cable office and Lynch's employer.

Davis told Flannery, according to the documents, that WUI was trying to fire Lynch but did not have enough evidence against him. Davis said that a WUI official in Puerto Rico had arranged with an officer at the 771st for the investigation to be conducted.

According to Davis, the WUI official and the military intelligence officer were "drinking buddies."

CITES 'VIOLATION'

When Flannery returned to Puerto Rico, no one at the 771st asked for a report on the Lynch investigation or even mentioned it. Normally agent reports are required for all MI activities.

Flannery wrote on Aug. 19 to Col. Arthur J. Halligan, then director of investigations of the Army Intelligence Command at Fort Holabird, re-



SEN. SAM ERVIN
... probes 'cover-up'

porting what he thought was a "flagrant violation of everything that I've come to believe is expected from military intelligence personnel."

According to Army and subcommittee documents, Halligan phoned Flannery some two weeks later and assured him that the matter would be looked into.

However, eight months passed and Flannery heard no word from Halligan, a deputy to Maj. Gen. William Blakefield, then commander of Army intelligence.

On his release from service in September 1970, Flannery contacted the inspector general of the Army's assistant chief of staff for intelligence. The IG has been conducting the Army's investigation.

The Army reportedly has dropped any idea of taking action against Halligan.